

VZCZCXRO1416  
PP RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHTH #0223 0501456  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 191456Z FEB 08  
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1223  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 0961  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 0101  
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0351

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 000223

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [YI](#) [KV](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: MGKV01: GREEK INITIAL REACTION TO KOSOVO  
INDEPENDENCE STAID

REF: ATHENS 207

Classified By: A/PolCouns Jeffery Hovenier for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Heavy snowstorms, UN Envoy Nimetz's imminent arrival for the next round of talks on the Macedonia name issue, and Cyprus elections have drawn Greek attention away from Kosovo's independence declaration. SEPTTEL will report on ongoing conversations on recognition. During a February 19 press conference following the GAERC, FM Bakoyannis stated Greece would make its decision after "examining in depth all developments, dimensions, and their repercussions." Bakoyannis reaffirmed that Greece would continue its contributions to NATO and EU Kosovo efforts, and MFA sources have confirmed that Greece is providing personnel to the EU Rule of Law Mission and the International Civilian Office (ICO), and will maintain troop levels in KFOR. Far-left opposition parties challenged the DI and the U.S. role in Kosovo. On February 17, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) issued an announcement calling Kosovo's independence "guided, controlled, and enforced" by the U.S. and EU. The Coalition of the Left (Syriza) characterized the declaration as a "grave blow to international law." Both parties called on the GOG not to extend recognition.

¶2. (U) Focused on other issues, the Greek media offered generally factual and moderate coverage of the DI as the inevitable conclusion of a "U.S.-led initiative." Critics underscored that Kosovo would likely become a precedent for other independence movements, primarily Cyprus. Perhaps due to the weather, the Greek public also remained uncharacteristically quiet with no group taking to the streets in Athens or Thessaloniki. (Note: The Port of Thessaloniki is particularly important as the main supply route for Kosovo. End Note.)

¶3. (C) Meanwhile, UK Embassy Political Counselor told us that the UK Mission to the EU termed the Greeks "surprisingly constructive" in GAREC discussions to arrive at conclusions on Kosovo. In the end, Spain and Cyprus were "isolated." The UK reported that once Spain had achieved its "difficult" textual fixes, only Cyprus remained opposed to conclusions that would allow EU-member states to recognize an independent Kosovo and would provide the needed cover for the European Commission to provide assistance. The UK Mission reported that Greece helped focus the discussion on areas for compromise and helped get Cyprus to the point where it could accept the conclusions.  
SPECKHARD